

June 24, 2026

The Honorable Brendan Carr
Chairman Federal Communications Commission
45 L Street NE Washington, DC 20554

Dear Chairman Carr:

We, the undersigned child protection, family advocacy organizations, and individuals, write to express our strong support for the Federal Communications Commission's Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, Ensuring Children's Safe Use of Screens and E-Rate-Funded Services, issued on June 4, 2026. We commend Chairman Carr for initiating this important proceeding and for recognizing the urgent need to examine how federally subsidized school technology can better serve children's educational, developmental, and safety needs.

The E-Rate program was established in 1997 to expand access to educational technology and connect schools and libraries to the Internet. At the time, Internet access was largely limited to supervised computer labs and educational use. Today, however, many students receive personal, Internet-connected devices that they carry throughout the school day and beyond. While technology can be a valuable educational tool, its widespread and often unregulated use has coincided with alarming increases in youth mental health challenges, classroom distraction, cyberbullying, exposure to harmful content, and other risks to children's well-being.

Parents, educators, pediatricians, and public health experts have growing concerns about the effects of excessive screen use on children and adolescents. Research increasingly links heavy screen use to diminished attention spans, reduced academic performance, sleep disruption, heightened anxiety and depression, self-harm behaviors, and social isolation. Recent findings from the Surgeon General and other leading health authorities further underscore the need for policymakers to assess whether current technology practices serve children's best interests.

Equally concerning is how easily students can access inappropriate and harmful content on school-issued devices and through school-supported networks. Reports indicate that many children are exposed to pornography, graphic violence, predatory behavior, and other age-inappropriate material despite existing safeguards. Taxpayer-funded educational technology should never become a pathway to content that undermines children's safety, healthy development, or educational success.

The Commission's NPRM appropriately seeks public input on several critical questions, including how E-Rate-funded services can better support educational outcomes, how schools can more effectively protect students from harmful content and excessive screen time, how parents and educators can be empowered to make informed decisions about children's access to technology, and how enforcement of the Children's Internet

Protection Act can be strengthened. These necessary and overdue questions deserve careful consideration.

Children deserve learning environments that prioritize their education, safety, and healthy development rather than unrestricted screen access. Parents deserve transparency and meaningful involvement in decisions that affect their children's digital lives. Schools deserve federal policies that support learning while minimizing avoidable harms.

We therefore urge the Commission to adopt this NPRM at its June 25, 2026 Open Meeting and begin a robust public examination of how E-Rate-funded technologies can better fulfill their educational mission while protecting children. We appreciate Chairman Carr's leadership on this important issue and look forward to participating in this critical proceeding on behalf of America's children and families.

Sincerely,

The Digital Progress Institute

National Center on Sexual Exploitation

Center for American Rights

Professor Meg Leta Jones
Professor and Chair

**The Communication, Culture &
Technology department at
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Just Talk to Them

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